

present when the area was wasteland, the deliberate creation of certain habitats and a combination of active management and natural succession over the succeeding years.

The wildlife gardens show ideas for creating wildlife friendly spaces. The habitat creation area consists of a number of habitats with artificial origins: wetlands, wildflower rich grasslands and small woodlands. The regenerated “wilderness” woodland is an excellent example of the potential of wasteland if allowed to develop on its own.

Thanks to the rich array of habitats and careful management work, Jupiter supports a wealth of biodiversity. Over 360 species of flowering plant have been recorded and attract many invertebrates. There are records of over 50 species of bird. Mammals are more rarely seen, although some species have been recorded. The ponds support breeding populations of amphibians.

Jupiter is also an important place for people. Curriculum linked education sessions, public events programmes, and volunteering are all popular. SWT’s partner organisation at Jupiter, BTCV Scotland, runs a Wildflower Nursery and a Green Gym. Secondary schools have been involved in exciting projects, designing and creating mosaics, murals and an outdoor classroom.

Urban Biodiversity: Successes and Challenges: Glasgow’s local biodiversity – the way forward?

Carol MacLean¹ and Cath Scott²

Glasgow City Council, Land and Environmental Services, 231 George Street, Glasgow, G1 1RX

¹E-mail: carol.maclea@glasgow.gov.uk

²E-mail: catherine.scott@glasgow.gov.uk

There were 24 attendees at the ‘Glasgow’s Local Biodiversity – the way forward?’ workshop, where people were asked to consider the following four questions:

1. Do you consider that the Glasgow Biodiversity Partnership is doing enough for biodiversity in the City?
2. What does your local greenspace need to make it good for biodiversity?
3. How can the Partnership best communicate and engage with ‘hard to reach’ groups?
4. What can *you* personally do to improve and enhance local biodiversity?

The results of the workshop, combined with a concurrent on-line questionnaire about biodiversity provision in the City (at www.glasgow.gov.uk/biodiversity) will help shape the future direction of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), which is being updated. Due to time constraints, only questions 1-3 were considered and as the first two questions were linked the responses to them have been combined. The key responses are summarised here:

Q. Do you consider that the Glasgow Biodiversity Partnership is doing enough for biodiversity in the City?

Q. What does your local greenspace need to make it good for biodiversity?

‘More work needed in city centre areas. Everything happens north of the river.

Use the Commonwealth Games to showcase biodiversity to visitors. Need better biological recording, brownfield sites need surveyed. Need better co-ordination between conservationists and contractors. Make sure greenspaces are high quality. Push for more allotments in the City. Provide more awareness of sites that communities can work on. Provide biodiversity interpretation in local parks. Combat vandalism by encouraging community participation and schools involvement.’

Q. How can the Partnership best communicate and engage with ‘hard to reach’ groups?

‘Engage more with local industries and companies and make better business links overall. Raise biodiversity profile by establishing a volunteer system linking various organisations. Target unemployed people at job centres to encourage volunteering – advertise. Give youth group talks and activities. Use social media such as facebook. Think about unusual media like drama groups, art and music groups – put on a biodiversity theatre production. Link more with secondary schools. Wider community work with different ethnic groups, taking ‘whole’ communities out on site. Use radio shows, places of worship and other venues to promote biodiversity.’

The update of the LBAP will include the development of a Community Engagement Plan which will allow local people and interest groups to help set local targets for biodiversity, and to consider the topics and queries above. The programme of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) designation and development will help achieve many of the concerns raised. Linn Park on the south side, will soon be designated as an LNR. Darnley Mill is a proposed LNR, also on the south side of the City. There are LNR leaflets which are designed to raise awareness of biodiversity and the importance of these sites for people and nature. There are already a number of volunteers helping at our LNRs and it is hoped these numbers will increase in the years ahead.

New ideas such as using drama and social media to raise awareness of biodiversity could add a different strand of actions to the updated LBAP.

There are clearly a number of issues which have been raised by discussion within the Workshop and opportunities for these issues to be addressed by the new LBAP and any related policies and strategies.

Urban Biodiversity: Successes and Challenges: Connecting habitats and communities workshop

Eilidh Spence

Froglife, Room 211, Graham Kerr Building, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ

E-mail: eilidh.spence@froglife.org

Urban environments are becoming increasingly valuable habitats for a wide variety of species. As these areas are associated with large populations of people there has to be a balance between protecting valuable habitats and providing suitable housing and related industry. Local communities have a considerable amount to offer and gain from being involved in improving their local area for wildlife.

Froglife's Living Waters projects are working in London and Glasgow to engage with local communities and help complete habitat creation and restoration work on standing open water habitats. This work is being carried out in partnership with Glasgow City Council and relevant London Boroughs, and is supported by local volunteer and 'friends of' groups from different urban parks. To promote sustainability of habitat work, communities are involved where possible on site and opportunities are provided to teach survey and practical conservation techniques.

Froglife designed the workshop 'Connecting Habitats and Communities' to promote the importance of community involvement and raise awareness of enhancing habitats and creating essential wildlife corridors to increase connectivity between sites.

The workshop commenced with a short presentation introducing Froglife's work followed by an interactive discussion with the audience. Eighteen people attended the workshop and were split into four groups. The groups were provided with a map of an urban site featuring a park, a school, ponds, hedgerows, ditches and allotments. A role-playing exercise was completed with each attendee being assigned a role as a different stakeholder with an interest in the local area. The character briefs included: a Head Teacher of the local school, a Council Park Manager/ Biodiversity Officer, and a representative from each of the following groups: a Friends of Group, a Local Natural History Society, a Wildlife Charity Officer and a Local Allotment forum.

The groups held discussions in which each person gave suggestions from their point of view to provoke discussion and develop ideas for the area. This included how they would improve the selected site for wildlife, a proposed methodology for completing this work, and suggestions on how to involve members of the community.

There were many aspects to cover in the session, but each group was able to provide one suggestion from their discussion to share with the rest of the audience. Groups had also written down a number of other ideas. Some similar themes emerged, as well as new initiatives for this type of urban site.

Examples provided from the group discussions are shown below:

- Pond creation and management - connecting and improving habitats including areas beyond the site boundary.
- Conducting surveys of flora and fauna and mapping what is present to improve records.
- Encouraging more local people to assist and gain new skills.
- Training and sharing knowledge across different community groups on wildlife friendly gardening, vegetable growing, pond creation and surveying.
- Working with local groups such as allotment users to save resources, for example water and tools.
- Improving amenity grassland with wildflower meadows. Connecting habitats and encouraging communities to get involved through planting and enjoying the aesthetic value of wildflower meadows. Creating more hedgerows to connect habitats.
- Writing a wildlife column for a local newspaper to share news e.g. nature diary or update community with recent work completed.

To conclude the workshop the site for which participants had made their suggestions was revealed as Foots Cray Meadows in South London. Work completed by Froglife in the area was also discussed, including enhancement of one pond and the creation of eight new ponds. Work is also taking place to improve the surrounding terrestrial habitats not only for amphibians and reptiles but also wider biodiversity. Friends of Foots Cray Meadows have been involved with Froglife and support the habitat improvement work.

The workshop was presented by Eilidh Spence and Sam Taylor from Froglife. Eilidh is the Glasgow Living Water Project Officer and can be contacted by email at eilidh.spence@froglife.org, or 01413390737. Eilidh is based at the University of Glasgow in the Graham Kerr Building. Sam is Froglife's Head of Communication and deputy CEO and is based at Froglife's headquarters in Peterborough. Sam can be contacted by email at sam.taylor@froglife.org.